

From: [Parker, Franklin R SES ASN \(M&RA\), EX4](#)
To: [Davidson, Janine HON UNSECNAV](#)
Cc: [Lutterloh, Scott W SES ASN, \(M&RA\); \(b\) \(6\)](#)
Subject: Follow-up re: USA Today Article
Date: Thursday, April 14, 2016 15:26:00
Attachments: [M&RA & OJAG Response to SECDEF Memo on Advancing Diversity.pdf](#)

(b) (5)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(b)
(5)

Pentagon proposal on 'Rooney Rule' for minority officers raising internal concerns USA Today | Tom Vanden Brook

WASHINGTON - The Pentagon is considering a version of the NFL's "Rooney Rule" to diversify its officer corps, a proposal that has already raised internal concerns about its legality, according to documents obtained by USA TODAY.

The proposal, sent to Defense Secretary Ash Carter for approval, would require the Army, Navy and Marine Corps to consider minority candidates for key jobs such as aide-de-camp and military assistant to senior leaders. Those slots are often springboards to higher ranks. In the NFL, teams are required to interview minority candidates for top jobs, including head coach, under the Rooney Rule, named after the Dan Rooney, owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Adopting a similar approach in the military "gives great prospect for alleviating persistent gaps in our senior leadership corps," according to the proposal developed by Brad Carson, who stepped down recently as the Pentagon's top civilian official for personnel issues. Each of the services and special operations forces have struggled for years to diversify its top brass with little effect. For example, USA TODAY reported last year that of the Air Force's 280 generals, just 18 of them belonged to minority groups. Overall, the active duty force of more than 1 million troops is about 69% white, 17% black and 4% Asian, according to Pentagon figures.

The services generally choose their senior leaders from front-line combat units such as infantry. Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for example, is an infantry officer. Minority officers, however, are underrepresented in those units for a variety of reasons, including personal choice. Giving more minority officers a chance to serve as aides to top officers could encourage them to pursue a career as a senior leader, according to a Defense official familiar with the proposal but not authorized to speak publicly.

Carter has pushed a variety of policies to diversify the military. This year, all barriers to women serving in combat units were dismantled. And the Pentagon is moving toward repealing its ban on allowing transgender troops to serve.

Carter believes that emphasizing diversity is essential for the military to attract and retain the troops it needs for the future, said another Defense official also familiar with the proposal but not authorized to speak publicly about it.

"Our ability to attract and develop a highly talented diverse cadre of officers to lead our military is essential to mission success now and in the future," the proposal states.

The diversity proposal being considered by Carter, however, has drawn internal criticism. The Navy, while saluting the goal of greater diversity, worries that implementing policy carries the "significant risk of litigation," according to a memo. The Navy memo calls for analyzing data on the problem and developing "narrowly tailored efforts" to avoid lawsuits.

The plan before Carter would direct each of the services to establish goals for race, ethnicity and gender among the officers it commissions to "reflect the diverse population in the United States eligible to serve in our military. Undertaking the additional effort to identify and recruit a diverse candidate pool will help us build a stronger force and expose more Americans to the opportunity to serve in our military."

The proposal calls on the services to report to Carter by May 1 on how they will incorporate the policy into their diversity initiatives.

The Pentagon's most elite forces, including Navy SEALs, are virtually all-white. Last year, the paper reported that eight of 753 SEAL officers were black, or 1%.

The Army, the largest of the services, has struggled to integrate its senior leadership. Black commanders of its main

combat units - the principal pathway to high command - are rare. The lack of diversity damages Army effectiveness, disconnects it from society and deprives black officers of opportunity, according to Army officials and military sociologists.

The Army's racial and ethnic breakdown is 58% white, 21% black, 13% Hispanic, 4% Asian and 3% responding "other." Commanding a combat battalion and then a brigade are virtual pre-requisites to reach the four-star level. USA TODAY reported that in the Army, only one black officer was slated to lead its 31 top combat brigades.

Expanding the pool of minority candidates for combat leadership has proved challenging for the Pentagon. Young black men, for decades, have opted for other fields, including logistics.
